

# *ALI 295: The Nature of Knowledge in Shi'i Narrations*

Part Two: January 21, 2015

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# The Hadith of Unwan al-Basri

- ◆ Narrated in Bihar al-Anwar
- ◆ Online copy at <http://www.iqraonline.net/hadith-of-unwan-al-basri/>
- ◆ He was a 94 year old student of Malik bin Anas
- ◆ Desired to seek knowledge from Imam Sadiq (a)
- ◆ العلم نور يقذفه الله في قلب لمن يشاء
- ◆ Imam Sadiq tells Unwan Basri
  1. Knowledge is attained through servitude
    - عبودية
  2. Seek knowledge through practice
    - Act according to what we already know
  3. Ask God to grant you knowledge
    - Seek help and be sincere

# Knowledge is a “Light” ...What is a Light?

- The Imam states that knowledge is نور
- Other things that are considered نور include:
  - The Holy Qur’an
  - The Narrations of Ahlul Bayt
  - The Intellect
- What does a light do? It illuminates, demonstrates a path...
- The light is supposed to illuminate our hearts or souls, but we need to take the necessary steps to allow our hearts to be receptive.

# The Advice of Imam Ali (a) to Kumayl bin Ziyad

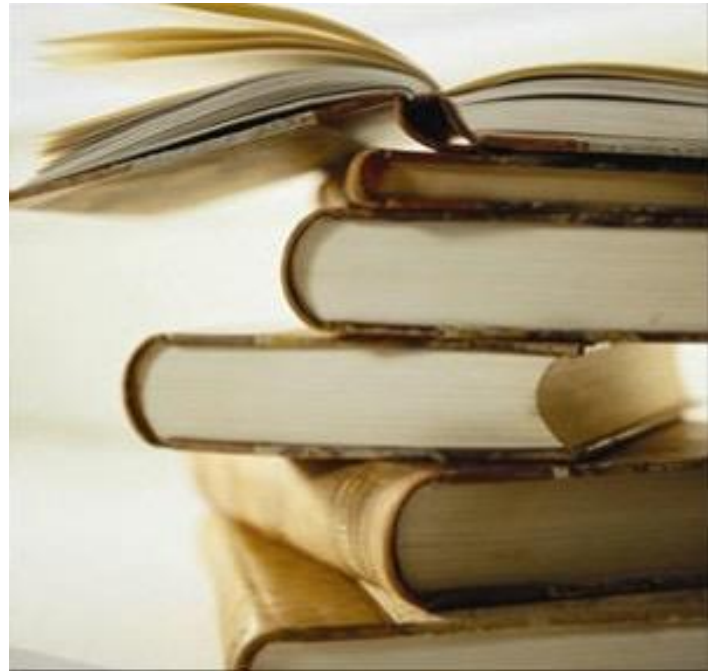
- The Imam takes Kumayl by the hand toward the desert, lets out a sight and says:
  - يا كُمَيْلُ إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ أَوْعِيَةٌ فَخَيْرُهَا أَوْعَاهَا
  - “Oh Kumayl, surely the hearts are receptive, and the best of the hearts is the most receptive.
- Hadith tells us:
  - القلب حرم الله فلا تسكن في حرم الله غير الله

# The Advice of Imam Ali (a) to Kumayl bin Ziyad (2)

- Imam Ali continues telling Kumayl:
  - فعالمٌ ربانيٌّ، ومتعلمٌ على سبيلِ نِجاةٍ ، وهمجٌ رِعاةٌ ، أتباعٌ : الناسُ ثلاثةٌ  
كُلُّ نَاعِقٍ ، يَمِيلُونَ مَعَ كُلِّ رِيحٍ
  - “People are of three types: the scholar, the one who learns (on the path to salvation), and those who are [worthless]...”
- He then continues about those who do not make use of knowledge:
  - لَمْ يَسْتَضِئُوا بِنُورِ الْعِلْمِ ، وَلَمْ يَلْجَأُوا إِلَى رُكْنٍ وَثِيقٍ
  - “They do not become illuminated by the light of knowledge, nor do they take the path to salvation...”

# The Advice of Imam Ali (a) to Kumayl bin Ziyad (3)

- “Oh Kumayl! Knowledge is better than wealth! You protect wealth, and knowledge protects you.”
- “Wealth decreases your provisions, while knowledge purifies them”
- “Your wealth will disappear...[but knowledge will always remain.]



# The Advice of Imam Ali (a) to Kumayl bin Ziyad (4)

- Imam Ali says;

- يَا كُمْيَلُ بْنَ زِيَادٍ، الْعِلْمُ دِينٌ يُدَانُ بِهِ ، بِهِ يَكْسِبُ الْإِنْسَانُ الطَّاعَةَ فِي حَيَاتِهِ ، وَجَمِيلَ الْأُحْدُوثَةِ بَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ

- “Oh Kumayl!

Knowledge is the the path toward religion. Through it, man can obey (God) in his life, and will have beautiful words spoken about him after he dies...”



# The Advice of Imam Ali (a) to Kumayl bin Ziyad (5)

- Imam Ali (a) continue to discuss the merits of knowledge to Kumayl bin Ziyad:
  - يا كميل بن زياد، هلك خزان ، والعلم حاكم والمال محكوم عليه  
الأموال وهم أحياء والعلماء باقون ما بقي الدهر، أعيانهم  
مفقودة وأمثالهم في القلوب موجودة
  - لو أصبت له «وأشار بيده إلى صدره»ها ان ههنا لعلماء جما  
حملة